2002 through which the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) are being paid subsidy currently at 1/3rd level of 2002-03 at a flat rate from the Union Budget. The subsidy from Government has been frozen at the current level and is to be phased out in 2006-07. The issue of further continuation of the Scheme is under the consideration of the Government.

Hardships being faced by the middle class due to high price of LPG

2374. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to high price of LPG middle class families have to spend much more on fuel to prepare food than on the main ingredients of food such as grains and vegetables;

(b) whether Government have any plan to avoid the hardship of the middle class family;

(c) whether Government want to link the LPG price with the average income of LPG consumers to curtail the heavy burden of prices on middle class;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) In the post Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) era, domestic LPG and PDS Kerosene are highly subsidized by the Government. Despite steep increase in the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market, the doemstic selling price of domestic LPG has not been revised since 5.11.2004. The Government has taken certain measures in favour of vulnerable segments of the economy, by ensuring that the burden was shared by all the stakeholders, namely, the Government, the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) and the consumers. This has resulted in huge under-recoveries to OMCs. The subsidy given by the Government and OMCs on LPG Domestic for the current year i.e. 2006-07 (Apr.-Dec.'06) is given below:

LPG (Domestic)

	Per Unit Subsidy (Rs./Cyl.)		
	From Govt. Budget	By Oil Companies*	Total
2006-07 (Apr.-Dec.'06) (Estimated)	22.58	154.51	177.09

*Gross under-recoveries without considering refinery discount, oil bonds and upstream assistance.

(c) At present there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to introduce multipricing for Domestic LPG.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of (c) above.

Regularisation of term/tenure-based employees of ONGC

2375. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the matter concerning regular employees and term/tenture-based employees in Gujarat ONGC;

(b) the number of term/tenure-basis employees working in Gujarat as on 28th February, 2007;

(c) whether it is a fact that the term-based employees at Dehradun were regularized but a similar facility was not given to employees in Gujarat; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) After the introduction of NELP by Govt. of India, ONGC has engaged Field Operators on tenure basis in the Western Sector depending upon the variable nature of work requirement over a period of time.

After the expiry of the 1st tenure, the persons found suitable based on physical standard, work experience and qualification, have been engaged for a fresh term of another 04 (four) years.